

## ***Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Task Team (TT)***

Minutes of Meeting  
January 7, 2005, 6<sup>th</sup> meeting

**Participants:** Peter Steinert, Chair (HQ Mass Transportation), Ina Gerhard, Recorder (HQ Mass Transportation), Al Arana (HQ Planning), Xiomara Balladares (HQ Right of Way), Tunde Balvanyos (AC Transit), Jerry Champa (HQ Traffic Operations), Tilly Chang (San Francisco County Transportation Agency), Paul Chiu (Caltrans District 4), Antonette Clark (HQ Design), Celia Chung (Santa Clara VTA), Don Dean (HQ Research and Innovation), Tom Dumas (Caltrans District 10), Annette Emery (HQ Mass Transportation), Jean Finney (Caltrans District 4), Charles Lau (Caltrans District 8), Wingate Lew (Caltrans District 4), Eunice Lovi (San Joaquin Regional Transit District), Jim McCarthy (Caltrans District 7), Chris Schmidt (Caltrans District 11), Peter Strauss (San Francisco MUNI), Jon Twichell (AC Transit), Mike Valcho (Caltrans District 7)

### ***Introductions/Approval of November 5 Minutes***

Following the introductions, Peter Steinert referred to the Governor's State of the State Address, in which Schwarzenegger advocated for tools to increase efficiencies in state government and for the promotion of public-private partnerships. Peter feels that the efforts of this TT are in line with the current administration's directions and policies.

Minor word changes to the last meeting minutes were suggested and approved as follows: Instead of: "Some changes to the California State Code will be required as well as changes to the shoulders..." it now reads: "Some changes to **California codes** will be required as well as **design** changes to the shoulders..."

**The TT approved the last meeting minutes.**

### ***Proposed Charter Timeline Revision***

The TT reviewed the proposed timeline revisions and agreed on a revised timeline as shown in the attached BRT TT Charter.

**The group decided to review the timeline again in April, if necessary, as some members expressed concern over the still very tight schedule. TT members and external agencies will receive the draft document for review and comments.**

### ***Report on Site Visits***

#### **Highlights of the visit to Los Angeles:**

- Xiomara: Enjoyed the excellent PowerPoint presentation by Rex Gephart; the visit of the operations management center; the ride on the MetroRapid bus which appeared to be not as fast/efficient as she had expected; took transit during the whole day and found out that it works in heavily congested urban areas; liked the branding and real-time arrival features.

- Tilly: Julie Kirschbaum gave a presentation of the site visit to her colleagues at the San Francisco County Transportation Authority; MetroRapid seems to be a great success even without dedicated lanes; the buses are a great success; would like to see collective bus purchases, if possible through the state.
- Chris: LA's message is that fairly simple technology and buses can result in a very successful system; inter-agency cooperation was crucial in the success of the MetroRapid; technical issues can be solved and are not the problem, instead the lack of cooperation is.
- Paul: Two agencies were involved - MTA and LADOT; once agency structure and cooperation are simplified, BRT will be a success.
- Al: Control room was very impressive; on the bus ride the group waited for 25 minutes for the next bus to come despite the 6-minute announcement; reliability seems still to be a problem; may be that's why dedicated lanes are needed on Wilshire Blvd.

#### **Highlights of visit to the Bay Area:**

- Ina: Impressed by traffic signal priority (TSP) demonstration; better understanding of the effort involved in getting TSP up, running and maintained; found wheelchair ramp operation on San Pablo Rapid bus very time consuming.
- Peter: Thanked everyone for the great presentations; emphasized importance of riding the bus and using the system in helping to understand what the advantages are and what further improvements are needed.
- Don: Lots of progress, in particular time savings, not only for buses but also for the overall traffic flow can be achieved with good traffic engineering.

#### ***Discussion of Draft Scoping Document***

The TT discussed the draft scoping document. Several suggestions as listed below will be incorporated in a revised version of the document to be discussed at the next meeting:

- Complete the chapter "Summary of BRT in California" to include **all** projects;
- Complement sections of the chapter as proposed by TT members;
- Add section summarizing features of planned BRT projects.
- Make fact sheets available to the TT, either by e-mail or on the Internet.

The following other issues were raised:

- Issue of support cost to implement MoUs as districts don't have EAs to charge to.
- Highway Design Manual (HDM) has no reference to BRT; guideline development will eventually include making changes to HDM.
- Talk to people in Caltrans who developed bicycle and pedestrian guidelines to learn from them about the process of getting guidelines approved, about technical, funding and institutional issues to make things happen.
- Greater emphasis on planning and coordination issues.
- Revisit the idea of "Conventional Highway" and "Freeway" subcommittees.

- Find out what other state DOTs are doing to facilitate BRT. NY DOT appears to be very involved.

**Peter agreed to research other State DOTs. Please send any information in that regard to Ina Gerhard. Ina will also make suggested changes and additions to the scoping document and will complete and send out the fact sheets for review. Please send further comments and suggestions to her.**

### ***Next Agenda Items***

- Discussion of scoping document
- How to form subcommittees?
- Technical versus institutional/cooperation issues/subcommittees
- What are other State DOTs doing?

### ***Next meeting***

The next videoconference is scheduled for:

**Friday, February 4, 2004, 9-11am**

Please also note that we have scheduled March videoconferences for:

**Friday, March 4, 2005, 9 - 11 am**

Minutes by: Ina Gerhard

Attachments:

- Bus Rapid Transit Task Team Charter (with revised timeline)
- Draft Scoping Document